

Santa Barbara City Council Subcommittee on Homelessness and Community Relations  
January 28, 2011  
3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Westside Center  
423 W. Victoria Street  
Santa Barbara, CA  
Minutes

Council Members Present: Helene Schneider, Dale Francisco (Chair), Bendy White

Staff Present: Paul Casey, Steve Wiley, Nancy Rapp, Capt. Alex Altavilla, Sue Gray, Deirdre Randolph

Stakeholders Present: Don Patterson (Sheriff's Dept), Alan Bleecker (Milpas Community Association), Richard Ring (Casa Esperanza), Jennifer Bernstein (Environmental Health), Rolf Geyling (Rescue Mission), Anthony Carroccio (Organic Soup Kitchen), Jennifer Ferraez (St. Brigid's/Doctors w/o Walls), Fr. Jon-Stephen Hedges (St. Brigid's/Doctors w/o Walls), Margaret Connell (City of Goleta), Jackie Campbell (City of Carpinteria), Deborah Schwartz (Planning Commission), Dave Lombardi (Downtown Organization)

#### 1. OPENING COMMENTS – DALE FRANCISCO, CHAIR

The main purpose of this group is to create a regional partnership to define alternate means, methods and locations for meal provision to the homeless. It is imperative that ongoing surveys are conducted to determine need. The upcoming Common Ground survey is a good first step.

#### 2. REVIEW SIX FOOD DELIVERY OPTIONS

Deirdre Randolph summarized the six options available for approved food distribution and the pros and cons of each. (See January 5 meeting minutes for more details).

**Permitted Shelter Kitchen / Permitted Food Facility / Hot Truck / Cold Truck / Temporary Food Facility / Vending Machines**

#### 3. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

- It is not up to the City to run a program of feeding the homeless. The City can help and facilitate as needed.
- City of Santa Barbara has 40% of the homeless population and 100% of the homeless beds. Recently the Salvation Army shut down in Carpinteria. It is a heavy burden on the City and there is a greater need for services. The region should share the load.
- Casa Esperanza is open to looking at a new food delivery system and the kitchen is capable of preparing food for delivery in "hot trucks" to other areas; however funding is an issue. They are looking at budgets now and may need to reduce services.
- Organic soup is another option. It is a cost effective, healthy and satisfying way to feed homeless.
- Need to find ways to distribute food without impacting neighborhoods.

- Using the parks for food distribution could have a very negative effect. Problems associated with clean up and loitering. Parks are already heavily impacted.
- Church parking lots might be a viable option. Important to get the congregation involved.
- Parking at a particular location may be complicated by the number of parking spaces required at a given site.
- Important to tie food distribution to a “teachable moment”. Tie into service provision with the goal to get people off the streets.
- Food distribution sites and times need to be consistent in order to be effective.
- Need to design a cost-effective model then duplicate it in other areas (Goleta, Carpinteria, Noleta, etc).
- Need a rational package that includes: inventory of needs, solution and opportunities for other communities to participate (e.g. transitional housing)
- Need cost effective solution. There is more need and less funding.
- Goleta Unified School District has a hot-truck vehicle that may be available for a pilot project; however it would only be available in the evenings, not at lunch time.

#### Next Steps:

1. Data gathering – Common Ground count is good start; focus on the most urgent needs.
2. A sub-group volunteered to come up with a food distribution model and present it at the next Council Subcommittee meeting:

Anthony Carroccio (Organic Soup Kitchen)  
 Jennifer Ferraez (St. Brigid’s/Doctors w/o Walls)  
 Mike Foley – Casa Esperanza  
 Jennifer Bernstein – Environmental Services  
 Also invite C.L.U.E. and Interfaith Council

#### 4. PUBLIC COMMENT (joined in general discussion)

- Any food provided should be of the quality that supports people who are now or near diabetic. Whole foods not processed foods. Many homeless are diabetic.
- The overall goal of this subcommittee is to reduce Casa Esperanza meals. The CUP should be revised. Meal provision should be at other locations – not lower Milpas.
  - So many of current services/meals originate at the lower Milpas area and therefore most problems are there. The new model should be that we are not just handing out food, but we encourage activity, ask for something in return, get the homeless out and distribute the services throughout the area.
- Many churches provide the social element. Transition House model is a good one to follow.
- The City does free food distribution in low income areas already.
- It’s all about location. Where do the homeless go? They go to where there is food, shelter and where they hang out.
- Gathering data about homeless population is absolutely critical.
- If another area is used [for food service] how that works has to be very carefully administered.
- It is a communal responsibility
- The vulnerability (Common Ground) index will help
- Goleta homeless are hidden.
- Food trucks would be an organized and streamlined system of delivery.

- We need to come up with a rational package: Here's the situation. Here are the resources to deal with it.
- We need to know what is in other places like Goleta and Carpinteria / an inventory matrix of other areas and agencies.
- What does the homeless population need? Answer that question and work from that.
- There are some services available in Carpinteria, but nothing City-sponsored. The focus has been to serve low and very-low income rather than homeless. Each City's housing element mandates zoning which allows a homeless center.
- Public policy approves expansion and allocation of resources.

5. NEXT MEETING – TBD, approximately one month

6. ADJOURNED AT 5:00 p.m.